



## **CITY OF ALBION PLANNING COMMISSION**

### **REGULAR MEETING**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**7:00 P.M.**

## **AGENDA**

- I. Call To Order (Reminder: turn off cell phones)
- II. Roll Call of the Commission
- III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes –
  - A. August 16, 2016
  - B. September 20, 2016
- IV. Correspondence
- V. Update on Comprehensive Plan Process
- VI. Discussion of Zoning Issues
- VII. Order of Business
  - A. Excuse Absent Commissioners
- VIII. Citizen Comments (Persons addressing the Planning Commission shall limit their comments to no more than 5 minutes. Proper decorum is required.)
- IX. Adjournment

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS**

- 1) The Planning Commission Chair opens the hearing
- 2) Chair summarized the process
- 3) Staff presents report on applicant's request
- 4) Chair reads any correspondence into the record
- 5) Public speaking portion of hearing
  - Individuals in support
  - Opposition speakers
  - Questions & rebuttal (directed through the Chair)
  - Public speaking portion of hearing closed
- 6) Finding of facts
- 7) Board begins deliberations
- 8) Motion is made
- 9) Roll call vote taken

Planning Commission  
August 16, 2016

I. Call To Order

The August 16, 2016 Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Strander and a quorum declared.

II. Roll Call of the Commission

T Pitt, G Brown, G Strander, G Strand, J Domingo, L Zuck, W. Dick

Staff Present: S Mitchell, City Manager, J Domingo, City Clerk and J Tracy,  
Director Building, Planning & Code Enforcement

Absent: S Brown and S Kipp

III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

G Strander asked for the following changes to the June 28, 2016 minutes:

G Strander was absent at the June 28, 2016 Planning Commission meeting.

J Domingo moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to approve the June 28, 2016 Planning Commission minutes with the above correction. (Voice Vote)

IV. Correspondence – None

V. Presentation of Preliminary Information/Findings for the 5 Year Comprehensive Master Plan-Phase 1

Rosalyn Jones presented the following highlights of the Comprehensive Master Plan-Phase I for the Planning Commission as follows:

- Public input is critical to the plan.
- The Albion Community Foundation administered a survey in which 242 resident's participated. The two major concerns were roads and housing.
- Ms. Jones acknowledged the AmeriCorps Vista grant written by Albion College and allows for eleven VISTA members to work with the College and City in 2016-2017 to boost economic development, education and health initiatives.
- The population growth has declined
- We have an aging population and have been unable to attract the younger generation
- Due to automation, decentralization and relocation of manufacturing operations and jobs, unskilled workers and youth have been the hardest hit by the economic

restructuring that has taken place in the American economy. As of 2015, 42% of Albion's residents over the age of 16 were not currently in the work force. People "not currently in the labor force" include stay-at home parents, who have not held and are not looking for jobs, the elderly, and the chronically sick and disabled. In addition, this count includes many "prime age workers" who are discouraged and disillusioned and have deinvested and given up trying to find a job.

- The Comprehensive Plan update is based on an understanding that the quality of housing impacts the attractiveness of the city, which impacts the level of artistic and cultural activity, which impacts the number of entertainment options, which impacts the attractiveness to talented and skilled workers, which impacts the level of economic activity.
- Redevelopment of housing in Albion is important not only to its existing residents, but also in the talent attraction efforts of businesses located within the local area and those throughout the region. The existing workforce is very mobile. People who are in the labor market are willing to commute to neighboring areas for employment. For example: in 2012, there were nearly 50,000 jobs in Calhoun county; however, of the 47,330 employed residents fewer than 27,000 of them worked within the county.
- Revitalizing the downtown is key to Albion's future. So the following questions are raised: where are the opportunities for downtown revitalization, what is the cultural and recreation niche for Albion and how do we reach our existing and target customers.
- There is an opportunity to enhance major gateways and corridors by developing strong and consistent visual themes along the major corridors and gateways and stabilizing them.
- Improve Albion's transportation network to accommodate and promote various modes, including walking, biking, automobiles, passenger rail and public transportation.
- Albion's River Trail is an important community asset and can draw people into the downtown.
- The Comprehensive Plan needs to be an actionable plan and to be able to measure the objectives.

Comments were received from Commissioners G Strander, G Strand, W Dick and G Brown.

#### VI. Public Comments-Five (5) year (2017-2021) Comprehensive Plan-Phase 1

Comments were received from Dr. Raymond Washington who asked if housing was the number one priority and also where the statistics on the comprehensive plan were from.

Ms. Jones stated the visions are not prioritized at this time but that the items are actionable and allows them to hit the ground running. She stated the statistics were largely from Census data and the Target Market Analysis. Ms. Jones also

stated she was willing to work with Dr. Washington on any changes he feels should be made to the Plan before going to Council.

Additional comments were received from Commissioners G Strander, G Brown and G Strand and City Manager Mitchell.

VII. Order of Business

A. Consideration/Approval of Recommendation of 5 year (2017-2021) Comprehensive Plan-Phase 1

Comments were received from Commissioner G Strander and City Manager Mitchell.

G Strand moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to approve current comprehensive plan that may change due to additional input, comments and edits.

(Voice Vote)

B. Excuse Absent Commissioners

W Dick moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to excuse Commissioners Brown and Kipp.

(Voice Vote)

VIII. Citizen Comments

Comments were received from Dr. Raymond Washington, Commissioners G Strander and T Pitt and Rosalyn Jones.

IX. Adjournment

G Brown moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Recorded By: Jill Domingo, City Clerk

Planning Commission  
September 20, 2016

I. Call To Order

Due to a lack of quorum, the September 20, 2016 Planning Commission meeting proceeded as a presentation to the Planning Commission.

II. Roll Call of the Commission

T Pitt, G Strander, G Strand, S Kipp

Staff Present: S Mitchell, City Manager, D Nelson, Special Projects Manager and J Tracy, Director Building, Planning & Code Enforcement

Absent: S Brown, L Zuck, W Dick, J Domingo and G Brown.

III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Due to a lack of quorum, minutes were not able to be approved.

IV. Correspondence – None

V. Presentation-Historic Districts, Amanda Reintjes

Amanda Reintjes updated the Planning Commission on Historic Districts with the following:

- The Michigan Historic Preservation Network is separate from the State Historical Preservation Office.
- The MHPN is a nonprofit entity.

Steps for membership to the Michigan Historic Preservation Network:

1. Resolution to setup study committee. This can be either volunteer or consultant.
2. Appoint Study Committee
3. Mapping boundaries and properties. You can use the existing National Registered district.
4. Public Hearing
5. One (1) year to make edits and submit. This will need a lot of public education.
6. Adopt ordinance and appoint Historic Preservation District Commission.
7. People will go to the Historic Preservation District Commission for approval of any exterior projects.

Comments were received from G Strander who stated we aren't able to act now but would like to put together a study committee.

#### VI. Update on Comprehensive Plan Input

##### 1. Monday, November 28, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.-Public Hearing and Adoption of Resolution by Planning Commission to recommend to City Council

Rosalyn Jones updated the Planning Commission on the Comprehensive Plan with the following:

1. Downtown stabilization and historic character goal-change to two (2) years. Recruit people who are action orientated and qualified.
2. August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Village Manager of Paw Paw presented on recruiting businesses.
  - Need to find similar towns to Albion as an example.
  - Paw Paw looked at analysis of how far people have to drive and what types of businesses would people want and what those businesses need.
3. September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Parking Discussion @ Cascarelli's at 6:30 p.m.
  - This is a tough discussion
  - May have to price parking
  - Make people feel safe parking behind the Bohm at night
  - PSCP grant would be a good candidate to make the parking behind the Bohn at night safer and make the alleyways more welcoming and safe.
  - Develop well-lit back lots (Holland is a good example of this)
4. Town Hall Meeting #1
  - Well received
  - Ask community about prioritization
  - Should include a downtown goal pertaining to economic vitality
  - The next Town Hall meetings are September 29<sup>th</sup>, October 13<sup>th</sup> and October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Board Member Strand asked if we should be looking at the costs of consultants and the types of assistance we will need and also should we also compare other communities that did and did not use consultants.

Ms. Jones stated she is beginning to work on this issue and tracking where we may need technical assistance.

Additional comments were received from Board Member Pitt, Amanda Reintjes and Building, Planning & Code Enforcement Director Tracy.

#### VII. Update on Redevelopment Ready Community

City Manager Mitchell stated we received a report of findings from MEDC and the Albion City Council approved the resolution to move forward with recommendations.

VIII. Excuse Absent Commissioners

Due to a lack of quorum, absent commissioners were not able to be approved.

IX. Citizen Comments

Comments were received from Board Member Strand and George Hartwell, who is a retired Mayor of Grand Rapids and expressed willingness to host a group from Albion and gather a group from Grand Rapids mayors, planners and developers to answer questions and discuss ideas in Albion.

X. Adjournment

No adjournment necessary due to a lack of a quorum.

Recorded By: Danielle Nelson, Special Projects Manager

**Comprehensive Plan Update  
Zoning Issues  
October 18<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission Meeting**

1. **Home-Based Businesses:** In order to encourage economic development and the growth of home-based businesses, what types of zoning ordinance changes are the City and Planning Commission willing to consider regarding parking, hours of operations, and noise levels within residentially zoned areas?
2. **Addressing or Alleviating Hardship:** What are the City and Planning Commission's vision for the residential area bordering Austin Avenue, which has been rezoned M-1? Is the vision for manufacturing or commercial and residential development? If commercial and residential development, then a B-4 designation would allow commercial and residential development.
3. **Stimulating Economic Development Via Pop-Up Stores:** Should the City encourage aspiring entrepreneurs to test their business concepts by supporting the creation of pop-up stores? If so, are there ordinances and zoning code provisions that are barriers to this type of economic development activity?
4. **Eaton Street Corridor and Surrounding Area:** In certain instances, current land use along the Eaton Street corridor is inconsistent with existing zoning classifications and needs to be updated. In addition, much of the land in the surrounding area is privately owned, staff will contact current owners to determine their future plans.
5. **"Missing Middle Housing":** Beyond infill development in targeted areas, are there other areas within the city that have the capacity to accommodate "missing middle" housing types? Examples: Dalrymple School; areas south of Irwin, south of Haven, east of Finley, etc. Most are currently zoned R-1A.
6. **Equestrian Center:** It may be necessary to make zoning ordinance changes, in order to accommodate the current and future needs of the Equestrian Center.
7. **PA 425 Agreement:** It is time to reevaluate zoning in the industrial park and planned use for the 425 property. The new EDC director should be involved in this discussion.